

Net Neutrality is the Internet's guiding principle: the company that connects you to the internet does not get to control what you do on the internet. It supports the definition of an open internet.

The debate of network neutrality (that is, extent to which network operators should be allowed to discriminate to selectively block, adjust quality, or dictate prices) has been going on since a long time (Peha, 2007).

This is how it works: At the top-most tier are organizations which are the Internet Service Providers (ISP) also known as tier-1 organizations. These firms provide internet to the customers but they don't need anyone else to provide internet to them. Their customers are other organizations like corporations, universities, and home internet. The consumers for these services are we, the citizens. These services connect us through phone, text, and internet. Taking an example of sending a mail to a friend, our mail is first sent to the ISP and they redirect it to our friend.

Everything was functioning smoothly until these organizations started expanding their services. The argument began when the companies started getting competitive and taking out benefits. For example, a telephone company said people have started using internet for making calls, so we should block or slow down the voice-chat.

In 2015, millions of activists pressured the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to adopt Net Neutrality rules that keep the internet free and open. Hence, allowing citizens to share and access information without interference. This would help people have their freedom of speech and information.

But lately there has been a debate: Trump's FCC chairman, Ajit Pai, wants to destroy Net Neutrality. The FCC voted to let Pai's internet-killing plan move forward. It means ISPs will have access to user information like user browsing patterns, location data and even Social Security numbers. ISPs could charge extra fees to select few companies and establish a monopoly.

In my opinion, it is a direct breach of user privacy and this should not happen. It means that Internet service providers (ISPs) should not block or discriminate against any website or web content. It is analogous, to our phone service provider who cannot decide who can we call. In

absence of net neutrality, an ISP can shut down or slow down its rivals content or block political opinion it disagrees with. This would destroy the open Internet.

According to Steimle, after the net neutrality legislation, the effects will be critical. Individual customer freedom will be lost. It would be unfair for small business due to lack of competition. And, it would be considered as breach to the privacy. (Steimle, 2014)

In a country like USA, there are many startups and small to medium sized firms. Net Neutrality is very critical for small to medium sized businesses, startups and entrepreneurs since they rely on internet to launch and advertise their product as well as create a market share. For small businesses to flourish, we need open unbiased market place. Restricting net neutrality will discourage entrepreneurs at the very first step of their business. It is because of Net Neutrality that small businesses and entrepreneurs have been able to thrive on the Internet. Also, ISPs like AT&T and Verizon are the gatekeepers to the Internet. Without Net Neutrality, they would try to seize every possible opportunity to profit from that control.

According to me, net neutrality should not be repealed.

## References

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